484

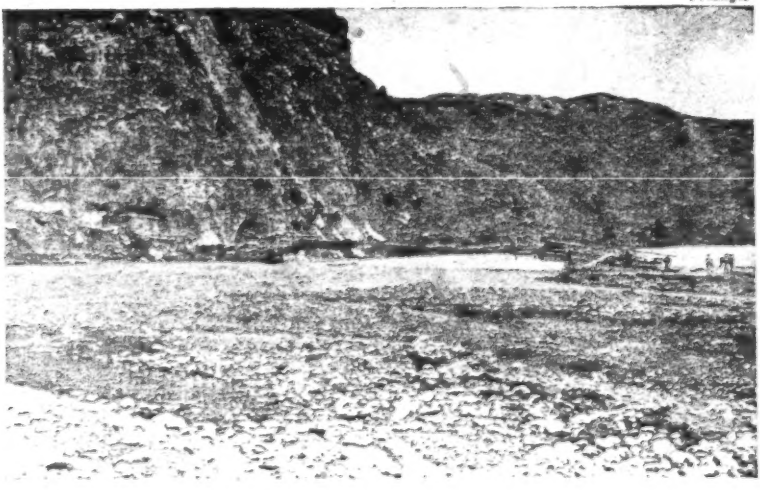
Lattimore

Travellers must often ford the Tekes and other rivers when the spring thaws come and there is no bridge.

Cantilever bridge across the Tekes River. Deep and swift-flowing mountain streams such as the Tekes makes travelling dangerous as well as difficult.

Triangle

491



[p. 32 (D)]

Aviation

One of the most significant recent innovations has been the establishment of regular aviation transport to and through Sinkiang. A Eurasia Aviation Corporation line between Shanghai and T'a Ch'eng, opened in 1933, was the first step; but its use was necessarily curtailed by the outbreak of war in 1937. Not until October, 1939, did Eurasia, through the medium of the newly formed Sino-Soviet Aviation Company, open a new service. It ran from Chungking to Ha-mi, whence, through the cooperation of Sinkiang authorities and the Soviet People's Aviation Company, it was continued via Tihwa, I-ning, and Alma-Ata (the latter over the border, in Soviet Kazakhstan) to Moscow. The trip from Chungking across Sinkiang to Alma-Ata totals about 2,584 miles and has become extremely important in United Nations mail and transport services.

Road Transportation

Most significant advances in the New Sinkiang have been those in the field of road transportation. The old caravan routes between China and Russia that run through Sinkiang have been readapted to modern truck travel. The only truck highway in Sinkiang before 1933 is said to have run only a short distance from the provincial capital, and there were then only some twenty military trucks in the whole area. But Ch'en Chi-jung has reported that by 1938 the following truck roads had been completed and put into use in North Sinkiang:

TRUCK ROADS IN NORTH SINKIANG, 1938

Main Roads	*Branch Lines*	*Termini*	*Distance Covered*
Ti-I		Tihwa and I-li (Sui-ting)	450 miles
Ti-Hsing		" " Hsing-hsing Hsia	470 "
Ti-T'a		" " T'a Ch'eng	430 "
	Ti-Tu	" " Turfan	
	Tu-Ch'i	Turfan and Ch'i-chio-ching	1,150 "
	T'a-Ch'eng	T'a Ch'eng and Ch'eng-hua	
Total Mileage ..			2,500 "

[p. 119]

2: Norins S-4 (1939-1941) 1944 A11 Sinkiang A11

491
494 Repairs and reconstruction were in addition undertaken over more than 1,875 miles of what is called "dry line" between Tihwa and Khotan (running via Karashahr, Kucha, Aqsu, and Kashgar). A transport control office of the provincial government, which had over 400 trucks of its own in 1938, has maintained control and repair stations on every line and by that date well over the equivalent of $500,000 U.S. currency had been expended on such work. By 1941 it was reported that there were altogether 3,000 trucks engaged in Sinkiang transport work.

Truck transport that has connected Tihwa with Soviet Russia and with other parts of China ran principally from T'a Ch'eng (on the Russian border) through Tihwa to Hsing-hsing Hsia (on the border of Chinese Kansu Province). There has also been important South Sinkiang contact with Soviet Russia from Kashgar to Andizhan via the Terek Pass. On the Chinese side the Sinkiang road system mainly links up with routes that have been under the direction of the Chinese Northwest Highway Administration via the 800-mile Kansu-Sinkiang motor road, which runs from Hsing-hsing Hsia (Baboon Pass) to Lan-chou. The Northwest Highway Administration has had a force—of 1,500 trucks as well as 5,000 drivers and supplementary workers—which maintains lines ultimately connecting up with Chungking. The main Kansu line, a modernization of the old Imperial Caravan Road which used to bear traffic in camels and carts from Sinkiang to Pei-p'ing, represents plans and work extending over the years from 1935 to the present.

Traditionally less well developed and less practicable for truck transport are the caravan trails which lead from Sinkiang (in the south) to Ch'inghai and (in the north) to Mongolia. These have been regularly used for limited local commerce—particularly the stretch from Keriya via Cherchen to Wu-erh-t'eng in Western Ch'inghai—and have great truckage and rail possibilities for the future.

Some Recent Developments

206 A milestone in Sinkiang modernization was the opening of through telephone connections between Tihwa and Chungking. *Ta Kung Pao* correspondent Ch'en Chi-jung used the line when he was in Tihwa on

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

for dinner I did not finally escape from Karghalik till 3 p.m. I was then faced with a 41-mile ride to Yarkand, including all the ceremonies involved in arriving at and departing from the town of Posgam as well as an hour or two's work with the Amban of that district. Attended only by Hafiz on his sturdy Kalmuck pony I called upon the black horse to rise to the occasion and galloped practically the whole way to Posgam (24 miles) in 2½ hours. At the British Subjects' tea-drinking, a mile short of Posgam, the poor old Aqsaqal and his friends had been waiting for me ever since noon, so I had to give them a good innings and hear all they had to say about their various lawsuits and other business. It was pitch-dark when I mounted again and trotted on into Posgam, and in view of this and of the gallop he had just done the black horse may perhaps be forgiven for coming down on a perfectly smooth bit of road and throwing me on my left shoulder rather heavily. The Amban, I was thankful to find, had abandoned the idea of a road-side reception hours before, and awaited me in his yamen; he was more considerate than my Manchu friend of Karghalik, and compliments, small talk, business and farewells were all successfully packed into an hour.

By seven o'clock I was again on the road, riding my other horse which had been waiting for me all day at Posgam. I had hoped to be able to trot and canter all the way into Yarkand (17 miles), but my shoulder, which had been wrenched by my fall, was somewhat painful and would not stand jogging, so I had to proceed the whole way at a walk. A hospitable British subject called Haji Turab Shah was ready for me at his house, a mile out of Posgam, with a good square meal for which I was extremely thankful. Crossing the Yarkand River a mile beyond this was strange experience. I was surprised to find that there was considerably more water than when we had forded this river early in November, and that some of the ferry-boats which had then been laid by were now again in use. I was told that this was due to the fact that in November the water of the river can still be drawn off for irrigation, and is used for flooding the fields which have been sown for next spring's crop; later, when the hard frost comes to the plains, the sluices of the canals become blocked with ice and it is no longer possible to draw off the waters of the river. I was escorted by the Aqsaqal of Posgam and two of his men, one of my own orderlies, and four of the Amban of Posgam's runners, who dangled at the end of poles monstrous

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

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red paper lanterns inscribed with strange characters. With our five horses we occupied the whole of the big flat-bottomed ferry-boats, in which we were poled across the two main channels of the river by morose ferrymen in enormous sheep-skin hats. It was a wild dark night, no stars, no moon; by the light of a yellowish glow from behind heavy clouds in the western sky we could see, spinning past us in endless procession on the swift but shallow flood, floes and fragments of ice, which glanced harmlessly off our sides as the ferrymen kept the bows of the boat up-stream. The dim glow in the west, the fantastic lanterns, the strange-hatted ferrymen, the horses whinnying nervously in the bows and stern of the barge and the swift procession of the ice-floes on the dark waters, combined to produce an effect of unreality; we seemed to be crossing some river of Hades in company with a boat-load of lost souls.

The remaining 15 miles into Yarkand were very long. What with the darkness and my painful shoulder we could not hurry, and it was midnight before we at last turned wearily into the courtyard of the house at Yarkand in which D. had been anxiously awaiting me since sunset.

Our Christmas lunch on the road between Yarkand and Kashgar was one of the chilliest meals I have ever eaten. Dismounting at a ruined farm-house we collected some fragments of green thorn-bush and tried with only partial success to make a fire behind a wall. When we came to "lay the table," we found that our drinking-water (not that we wanted to drink much) was frozen in the thermos, the hard-boiled eggs were also hard-frozen (D. thought the first one she broke was bad and threw it away), the cold chicken emitted a ringing sound when tapped and the juicy Kucha pears had to be thawed before we could get our teeth into them!

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DISPENSING MEDICINE TO THE KIRGHIZ, CHOPKANA JILGHA

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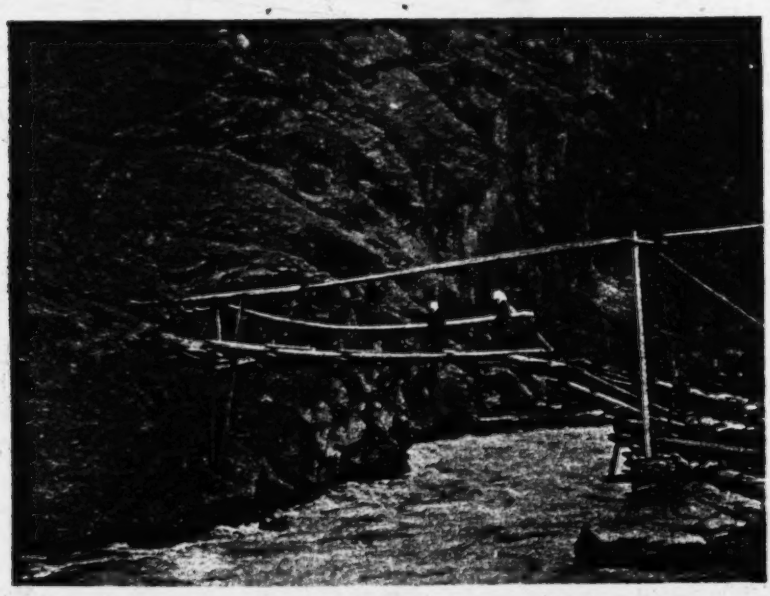

A KIRGHIZ BRIDGE BUILT ON THE CANTILEVER PRINCIPLE, KHANTEREK. THE FOREMOST OF THE LADIES CROSSING IS CARRYING TWIN BABIES

[Face p. 146]

Only since 1930 have some automobile highways been built, and the Communist regime, in cooperation with Soviet Russia, are building the first Inner Asiatic railway, linking Alma-Ata with Lan-chou. This railway will, without doubt, speed up the Sinification of the frontier areas, and above all add industrialization to agriculture and pastoral nomadism.

As far as Chinhai was concerned, the Western Mongols (the Oirats) were also locally ruled by dzasaks, the leaders of banners. Unlike the banners of Inner and Outer Mongolia and Sinkiang, however, they did not combine banners to form leagues or to elect one of their tribal leaders as the captain-general of the league. The Chinese governor- with his seat in Sining - functioned as captain-general. In regard to the nomadic Tibetans, the Chinese government appointed chieftains as dzasak-lamas and gave them the rights and the privileges which this office involves. The sedentary Tibetans were ruled by t'u-ssus, also appointees of the Peking government. By and large, this governmental pattern existed until the Communists came into power.

The form of governing non-Chinese peoples changed in the course of time in various ways, but one thing never changed: the aim of the Peking government to rule, to suppress, to exploit, and to sinify them.

Unlike the eighteen provinces in China proper, the province of Sinkiang (after 1884) and the Eastern Three Provinces, (after 1907) the areas comprising Mongolia, Tibet, and Chinese Turkestan, although occupying more space than China proper, were administrated by a quite different type of governmental system. Political subdivisions of the Chinese Empire such as Mongolia, Chinese Turkestan and Tibet were usually referred to as dependencies. This is however an inaccurate translation of the Chinese term "fan," which really means "the barbarian west." Since the cultural, ethnic and historical background in these areas was very different from the rest of the Empire, these regions required, and in practice had, a very particular type of governmental control. All these frontier territories were administered by the "Department of Dependencies" in Peking. This department was subdivided into the following bureaus:

a. Inner Mongolian bureau, that administered frontier boundaries, titles of nobility, appointment of officials, military affairs, league conferences, and finally organization of banner units of Inner Mongolia.

b. "Reception bureau" for Inner Mongolia nobility, that was responsible for the payments and allowances to the Inner Mongolian aristocracy.

c. Eastern Turkestan bureau, that was in charge of Moslem affairs in Eastern Turkestan.

175 Turkestan resources by proposing an open trade agreement in No-
648 vember 1946 remained unanswered by the Soviets.

The Chinese attempt to regain control by Chang Chih-chung's policy of negotiation was based on military measures aimed at strengthening the strategic position. Along the whole route from Lanchow to Urumchi, blockhouses were maintained at distances of about twenty miles. And at the same time a new effort was made to open up the route from Ching-hai. The new Moslem governor of the province, Ma Pu-fang, received Nationalist support in his [491] efforts to build a road from Sining along Lake Kokonor towards the Tarim Basin. This road had been driven well past the Kokonor before the Communist victory in 1949. The National Government [701] had also strengthened the military force in Sinkiang. In addition to the six divisions which Governor Sheng Shih-ts'ai had left behin, four divisions of Nationalist troops had been sent to the province and two divisions of Ma Pu-fang's cavalry from Chinghai had also been brought in, bringing the total of Chinese forces up to twelve divisions, or about 100,000 men, which have remained there since the Communists took over.

In spite of this military force, Governor Chang Chih-chung did not succeed in transforming the agreements concluded with the Kulja group in 1946 into a working arrangement. He demanded that the reorganization of the forces of the Kulja area should be preceded by acceptance of Chinese control. He also wanted the approval of the Sinkiang Nationalist leaders for the railroad to be built from China into Sinkiang and the acceptance by Sinkiang of the Chinese Nationalist currency. The Sinkiang Nationalist leaders refused these conditions, and in May 1947, Chang Chih-chung resigned as governor and was succeeded by an Uighur, Masud Sabri, who was a compromise candidate acceptable to the Chinese National Government. In July 1947 the Kulja nationalists broke with Masud [669] Sabri and maintained their own autonomous administration under Akmedjan. The situation remained in a deadlock and the Kulja group was reportedly receiving aid for its troops from Soviet Russia. The Kazakh leader, Osman Batur, who had formerly joined the Kulja group, had broken with it on account of the Soviet support and had withdrawn with his own forces to the Altai border region.

To overcome the deadlock with the Turkic Nationalists, the National government agreed in December 1949 to the appointment of one of the Nationalist leaders as governor of the province. This was Burkhan who was by origin a Russian Tatar and a man with whom the Kazakh nationalists were willing to cooperate. In January 1949 Chang Chih-chung flew once more to Sinkiang to negotiate a new Sino-Soviet economic treaty. But all these moves by the National Government to appease Soviet Russia by economic concessions and to appease theRussian-supported Kulja Nationalists

thinly populated area with a Chinese population, is the most important factor in the reassertion of Chinese control. The Chinese link with Turkestan is also not limited to the railroad under construction which will run along the old caravan route via Qomul, Urumchi, to the Soviet border. In addition the Chinese Communists follow the policy of the National Government in the construction of road and railroad connections through the Tsaidam Basin. This area is reportedly also to be developed by Communist China into a new key industrial center in central Asia. Oil and mineral resources are claimed to exist in abundance. The Tsaidam region is farther away from the Soviet or Outer Mongolian border than is the main railroad line and it provides a position in depth in the Chinese Communist connection with Sinkiang. In its advance into central Asia, the Chinese Communist regime seems to follow the main strategic considerations which had been observed by previous Chinese governments

With the shrinking distances and the means of modern industrial development, the importance of Sinkiang with its rich natural resources has vastly increased. There is at the moment no indication of any hitch in the Soviek-Chinese cooperation in the province. But should any conflict evolve between these Communist organizations, Sinkiang must, by the very reason of its geographic location and economic importance, become one of the decisive areas of conflict.

oases. A trade road, looping around the desert, links the oases like beads on a string, forming a U with the open end toward the east.

Dsungaria is in northern Sinkiang, between the Tienshan and the Altai mountains which mark the frontier between Sinkiang and Western Mongolia. Precipitation here is slightly higher, and steppe vegetation makes pastoralism possible. Northern Dsungaria was the avenue of migration followed by the Mongols in their westward conquests.

2. Pastoral nomadism

In 1943, there were 11,720,000 sheep and goats in Sinkiang, 1,550,000 cattle, 870,000 horses, and 90,000 camels, totalling 14,230,000. In 1947 the province reported 12,266,000 sheep and goats, 1,659,000 cattle, 1,027,000 horses, and 85,000 camels, a total of 15,037,000. The total has remained somewhat constant over a period of time, probably due to the fact that pasture land is poor and care of the herds inadequate. Most of the livestock are in Dsungaria, pastured in the steppe land by nomad Kazakhs or Mongols. There are many variations to the techniques of herding animals since cattle, horses, and camels each prosper best on different kinds of pasture. The problem is to devise the best combinations of animals to be maintained and to select the appropriate pasture, decide how long to remain on a pasture, when to move, and how.

3. Oasis agriculture

There are two kinds of oases in Sinkiang: those in the south, which are sharply isolated from each other by desert stretches and the oases of the north, which have fringes of land in which rainfall farming prevails. When irrigation was introduced, it seems to have been practiced first on the lower courses of the rivers, where the soil was soft and the engineering problems required only the digging of simple ditches from the banks of the streams. In the course of time, as knowledge of engineering developed, the tendency was for the oasis to move upstream toward the boulder slopes at the edge of the foothills, but not back into the gorges where the problems were far too great.

Oasis engineering is extremely simple. The basic pattern is a main canal from the river, branching into smaller canals which branch in turn into ditches which deliver water to the fields, all arranged so that water flows by gravity from level to level, without the pumping or bailing devices which are widely used in China and in Sovict Turkestan to lift water from lower to higher levels.

In volume of discharge, the rivers of the Tarim system are far behind the two great rivers of Soviet Inner Asia, the Syr Darya and the Amu Darya. The total discharge of all streams in Sinkiang is about 3400 cubic meters per second, of which about seventy per cent is in the Tarim Basin. In irrigation engineering

than that of Kansu. The details are shown in the following table:

Table IV: The Exports and Imports of Ninghsia, 1933

Description	Value (yüan)	
A. Exports:		4,040,000
opium	2,400,000	
sheep's pelts	900,000	
medical herbs	450,000	
wool	240,000	
hair-like weeds	50,000	
B. Imports:		2,270,000
cotton piece goods	1,400,000	
silk, woolen cloth, cosmetics	300,000	
sundries	120,000	
cotton	150,000	
grain	300,000	
Grand Total		6,310,000

Source: Shina Shōbetsū Zenshi, 1943 ed., Vol. 7, pp. 638-39.

D. Chinghai

Trade in Chinghai is centered around Hsi-ning, the provincial capital. Aside from the two routes which connect Hsi-ning and Lanchou, there is another route leading to Tibet and still another to Sinkiang. The main exports were fur, hide, grain, salt, lumber and medical herbs, among which fur and hide, the staples, are mostly shipped to Tientsin for re-export. The main imports are cotton piece goods and silk. Trade statistics are not available. It is also known that there was considerable trade between Chinghai and India, but details are lacking.

E. Sinkiang

Trade in Sinkiang is a little more complicated, because Sinkiang trades not only with agricultural China, but also with Soviet Russia, India and Afghanistan. So far as the trade with agricultural China is concerned, there are three main trade routes. One runs from Urumchi to Tientsin via Kobdo, Urga and Pao-t'ou, generally known as the Outer Mongolia Great Grass Route. Another runs from Urumchi to Tientsin via Qomul (Hami), Darkhan League, Kuei-sui and Pao-t'ou, generally known as the Inner Mongolia Lesser Grass Route. And still another is the historical Great Northwest Highway which leads to Sian via Qomul (Hami) and Lanchou. The Outer Mongolian route had been out of use since the independence of Outer Mongolia. The Inner Mongolia route was originally a caravan route. But since 1933, the section between Urumchi and Kuei-sui has been open to motor traffic under the name of Sinkiang-Suiyuan highway.

439 motor traffic under the name of Sinkiang-Suiyuan highway. In
491 1935 there were about fifty trucks or buses running on this high-
494 way, making four trips a month. The historical Great Northwest
175 highway has also been open to motor traffic since 1930. During the Sino-Japanese War, this traditional highway was one of the most important outlets of free China. It is reported that in the first half of 1942, some seventy million rubles worth of tea, tung oil, bristles, wool and other goods were exported from China to Russia through this route. On the other hand, there were some fifteen million rubles worth of dried goods, metal, canned goods and wine imported to China during the same period, together with an unidentified amount of weapons and war material that the Soviet Union sent to China under the 1939 Sino-Soviet Military Agreement. The total number of five-ton trucks used during the period was 3,600; but those actually in operation were only about a thousand. The total capacity, including camels, of that route was not more than two thousand tons per month. (Cf. Shina Shōbetsū Zenshi, Vol. 8, pp. 636-39. It must be taken into account that this is a Japanese source.)

175 Table V: Trade Between Sinkiang and Tientsin, 1930-32 average
439
435

Description	Value (yüan)	
A. Exports:		5,298,900
sheep intestines	2,400,000	
furs and hides	2,809,000	
raisins	54,000	
medical herbs	17,200	
dried mushrooms	18,000	
B. Imports:		2,743,562
cigarettes and tobacco	808,720	
woolen cloth	104,550	
silk	223,600	
linen	285,200	
cotton goods	110,200	
medical herbs and drugs	84,730	
stationary and books	70,700	
hats and shoes	99,000	
tea	868,852	
leather goods	6,800	
cosmetics	28,350	
paints and dyes	1,200	
hardware	2,160	
seafood	4,100	
chinaware	1,560	
miscellaneous	2,240	
Grand Total		8,042,462

Source: Chung-kuo Ching-chi Nien-chien, 1935 ed., vol. 3, pp.88-90.

N
*175 it was opened for traffic in the autumn of 1945. This 165 kilometer
496 railway ran from Paoki following a stretch of the Wei River to T'ien-shui in Kansu. This Paoki-Tien-shui area was regarded as a place of great strategic importance during the war.

Excluding the Hsien-yang-Tung-ch'uan branch of 138 kilometers, total mileage of the Lunghai Railway, before 1949, was about 1,380 kilometers of which the section from Tung-kuan to T'ien-shui running in the Northwest Region was roughly 600 kilometers in length.

N
491 B. Highways
*[175] Highway construction in Northwest China had been well-developed up to the war. The main lines may be listed as follows:

	kms.
1. Highways in Shensi:	
Sian-Chang-wu section (of Sian-Lanchow Highway)	210
Sian-Tungkuan	145
Sian-Paoki-Ning-chiang section (of Szechwan-Shensi Highway)	500
Sian-Mei-hsien	145
Wei-nan-Ta-li-Han-cheng	180
2. Highways in Kansu:	
Lanchou-Ping-liang-Chang-wu section (of Sian-Lanchou Highway)	550
Lanchou-Yumen-Hsin-hsin-chia section (of Kansu-Sinkiang Highway)	1,400
Lanchou-Hsiang-tang section (of Kansu-Chinghai Highway)	120
Lanchou-Min-hsien section	350
Hua-chia-ling-T'ien-shui	210
Ping-liang-Kuyüan-Tung-hsin (in Ninghsia)	220
3. Highways in Ninghsia (now part of Kansu):	
Ninghsia (Yin-ch'uan)-Tung-hsin	210
Ninghsia-Shan-pa (in Inner Mongolia)	325
Ninghsia-Ho-chia-chi (toward Lanchou)	240
4. Highways in Chinghai:	
Hsining-Hsiang-tang section	110
Hsining-Kuei-teh	108
Hsining-Lin-hsia (in Kansu)	190
Hsining-Tu-lan (toward Tun-huang)	428
Hsining-Ta-ho-pa (toward Yu-shu)	327
S 5. Highways in Sinkiang:	
• 491 Urumchi-Hami-Hsin-hsin-chia	835
Urumchi-Wusu-Ili (toward Russia)	691

(Wang, Chin-fu. Hsi-pei ti ti-wen yü jen-wen Huang, Fen-sheng. 127-29; Pien-chiang tun-ken-yüan 126-28.)

N
491 It is interesting to note that part of the highways in Kansu and
487 all those in Sinkiang were built on the old trade routes. Highways in this region were centered at Sian, Lanchow, Ninghsia (Yin-chuan),
S Hsining and Urumchi.
[491]
[487]

1: Washington S-4 (no date) 1956 AF13 Northwest China AF13
Sinkiang AI1

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*668 In Chinghai Province, three short lines were completed by
491 January, 1954, namely the renovated Lao-ya-hsia sector of the
499 Kansu-Chinghai Highway (Lanchow-Hsi-ning Highway), the sector
*175 south of La-chi-shan on the Hsi-ning Kuei-teh Highway originally planned by the Nationalist Government, and the new Hsün-hua-Tung-jen Highway, with a total of 360 kilometers. Among the publicized trunk lines, the most notable one was the 2100 kilometer Hsi-ning-Lhasa Highway. The first part of this line was constructed along the old Chinghai-Sinkiang route, and was originally built by the Mohammedan leader Ma Pu-fang during 1946-1948 (from Sining to Chin-hung-shan), from Hsining to Gormo along the southern edge of the Tsaidam basin, then the highway turning south via Ku-ku-shih-li reached Chi-ting-si-lin, the common point of Chinghai, Sikang (now part of Szechwan) and Tibet, and thence leading to Lhasa in Tibet. The complete Hsi-ning-Lhasa Highway was opened to traffic on November 16, 1954. It linked with highways radiating northwest to Sinkiang and east to Lanchou, and met Sikang-Tibet Highway at Lhasa to keep close contact with the Southwestern provinces. Of the old roads, there was the Chinghai-Sinkiang Highway (Hsi-ning-Chin-hung-shan Highway) which was damaged before 1949, the Hsi-ning-Gormo section of about 800 kilometers which was restored in 1954 as part of the Hsi-ning-Lhasa Highway, and the rest repaired in May of 1955. Along the old Hsi-ning-Sikang route construction began in early May of 1955 on the Hsi-ning-Kuolo Highway of 627 kilometers leading to the Kuolo Tibetan National Autonomous District. Consisting of sections of the Hsi-ning-Hua-shih-hsia (424 kms.) and Hua-shih-hsia-Chi-mai (203 kms.), the Hsi-ning-Kuolo line was completed in November, 1955. The completion of these highways further facilitated the interflow of supplies between the agricultural and pastoral areas and supported the economic construction of the national minorities.

S
• 491 In Sinkiang, the traditional arterial highways were centered at Urumchi. To the south, one highway at Kurle was divided into two branches and met again in the west at Kashgar to form a circle link around the Taklamakan desert; to the east the highway led through Turfan, Hami toward Lanchou; to the north, a line ran along the Manas River to Sharasume (Cheng-hua); and to the west there were two highways stretching to the Sino-Soviet border, one to Ho-cheng and the other to Ta-cheng. Along the Old Silk Road, from No-chiang, one highway was extended eastward to Tun-huang in Kansu. There were three highways connecting Urumchi with Russia through Ta-cheng, Hocheng, and Kashgar, to link with the Soviet-Turksib Railway stations at Ayaguz, Ilisk, and Andizhan respectively.

1: Washington S-4 (no date) 1956 AF13 Northwest China AF13
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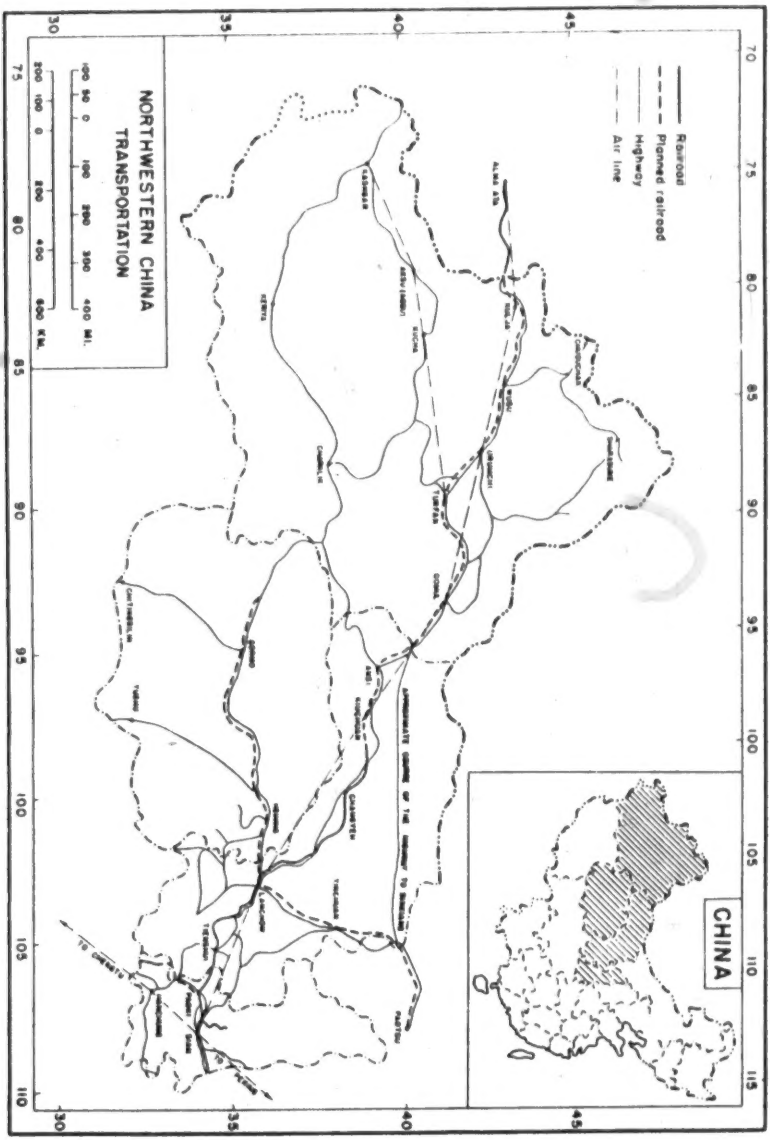

[following page 704]

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China
Sinkiang AI 1

'The Governor declares,' read the officer, who this morning was in a flattering mood, 'that the three ladies, Feng Precious Pearl, Feng Polished Jade, and Kai All Brave, are people of the highest reputation, and therefore they, their escort and baggage, are permitted to enter Turkestan without delay.'

There was great lamentation in the garrison when the men saw us preparing to leave. 'They say that next week we shall get our pay, and if this be true we would have bought all your remaining books!' The gaming tables were abandoned as the crowd gathered to say good-bye and wish us good luck, and as we left the ravine an orderly appeared carrying a handful of vegetables—two cucumbers and a melon—from the officer's wife. The supply of these luxuries from Hami being very limited this gift represented a whole day's ration for her household.

It was with a delightful sense of freedom that we emerged from the 'Ravine of the Baboons' and took the desert path once more. We had left the grey and black pebbles of the Black Gobi behind us on the south side of the ravine, and we now came out into a most interesting and varied country. Granite hills surrounded us, and frequently the carts had to be dragged over immense slabs. The soil in places was red; the outlines of the ranges of hills were bare and rugged, while their colouring was as delicate as it was remarkable. Blue, purple, green and grey stretches of rock lay all around us, and as sun and shadow played on them the whole landscape was iridescent with the tones of the rainbow. We also passed at the very foot of the Starry Mountain, and there delayed a few minutes so as to fill our hands with the glittering fragments of quartz. At the base of the granite rocks were excavated holes, large enough to admit the entrance of a man's body, and

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China
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asses and of bronchos, reputed to be untameable. We were now at an altitude of 5500 feet, and on the edge of a bare plateau overlooking a depression to the south, from which a road led off in the direction of Turfan. It was an ancient road, now in disuse, being considered too dangerous for caravans. The wind blows down this valley with such tremendous force that whole caravans have perished, the carts being blown to pieces and the men and beasts overwhelmed by the whirling sand. The innkeeper pointed out a spot called San Chien Fangtz—'The Three Rooms'—where eighteen carts laden with silver are said to have totally vanished. Acting as servant to this innkeeper was a young man who greeted us with sheepish cordiality. 'You got away all right from Hsinghsinghsia,' he said, and he proved to be one of the men who had escaped on the rainy night of our stay there, and who had not been recaptured.

Leaving that afternoon, we saw a lizard differing from any we had met with in other parts of the desert. It was about one and a half feet long, and was too quick for the carters, who chased it with their whips but failed to catch it. Continuing uphill between rocks, granite boulders, and volcanic slopes, over a stony road, we reached Chekuluchüan—'Cart Wheel Halt.' Of the three inns which formed this hamlet, two were untenanted and the third was badly broken down. Some of the rooms were roofless, while in others large holes had appeared in the walls, but having accomplished the short stage we were thankful to get rather longer hours of sleep than usual, and felt greatly refreshed by the cooler air of this quiet spot. The little row of inns stood in a gorge between stony hills, and the force of the gales through the narrow ravine was so great as to have worn the rocks into hollows, in the depths of which

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birds had made their nests. This was the most striking example of wind erosion that we saw.

This last stage had been taken in company with Mr. Hunter, whose little cart frequently made better stages than our heavy vehicles could manage. At this point we were all needing small repairs to our carts, and also the stony roads had become very heavy on the shoes of our teams, but Mr. Hunter now produced a travelling farrier's outfit, and with the help of his man shod the mules, greatly to the admiration of the Chinese by-standers, who commented freely on the resourcefulness of this experienced traveller. Mr. Hunter's man was a Mongolian youth, called 'Nimga.' The Living Buddha, to whom he was subject, had given him as an orphan boy to the missionaries. He always slept where he could watch the horses, and on one occasion, when he felt certain that horse-stealers were prowling around, lay down on a horse's back and slept there. His horsemanship was splendid, accustomed as he was to riding from infancy.

The Turki innkeeper, a tall, lean, bearded Moslem, looked with some suspicion at this party of foreigners. 'What have they come for?' he asked Mr. Hunter. 'Is it bones, plants or game that they want?' 'Nothing of the kind,' was the answer, 'these are missionaries.'

'Oh, that's different,' he grunted, 'but some of those who come, why there's no knowing what they want! There was a man here once upon a time, and his servant told me that he came to Chekulu in order to measure the distance to the sun! A likely tale! Couldn't he measure it in his own country? Surely you can *sometimes* see the sun in Western lands?'

For four hours that evening we descended a smooth, downhill road, and on reaching the plain entered a sandy basin about twenty miles across, the lower part

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of which was full of tamarisk mounds. Many of these stood twenty feet high, and here, as everywhere in the desert, each plant was raised on a mound accumulated round its roots, this being the soil blown by the wind from some more fertile region. Among the tamarisks were plants of Saksaul (*Anabasis Ammodendron*), whose contorted stems, grey cracked bark, green plumes of small greyish leaves, and pink fruit differentiated them from the more feathery species. It has been computed that these tamarisk hills may be from 500 to 1000 years old. The trunks of a forest of dead poplars stood beyond, and added a final touch to the desolation of the scene.

Tsikioking—'The Seven Cornered Well'—stands in the sandy basin, and is now a place of some importance, boasting a small Government Official who also controls the post-office. It is here that the roads divide which lead from Hami to Turfan, and Hami to Kucheng. We were following the latter, but the telegraph wire went via Turfan to Urumchi. Great as was our desire to see Turfan—a most interesting locality—we realised that it was scarcely safe to enter such a hot area at midsummer. We were warned that at this season people were dying from heat, and that the inhabitants protected themselves by spending the hours from sunrise to sunset in underground cave dwellings. The Turfan depression descends to two hundred feet below sea-level, and presents conditions most favourable to agriculture but almost insupportable to man. Tsikioking is better supplied with fuel than any of the surrounding oases, and in winter its population is increased by families who move here for those months. The best fuel known in the desert is the root of the tamarisk. It is of dark hard wood which, chopped into small pieces and sun-dried looks like coal, and has a great deal of its burning

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372 qualities. Several of the desert plants and roots supply fuel of fair quality, but in most places the people are dependent on animal droppings, cow dung being the best variety since, well dried, it gives out a glowing heat.

647 A visit to the Official brought us once more into the tragic conditions of Yamen life. A young man, with signs of the opium habit upon him, received us with the usual Chinese courtesy, and introduced his wife, who was a nice-looking and self-respecting girl; but there were other women in the household of such a character as must have made existence in Tsikioking a living death to her.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THROUGH THE CELESTIAL MOUNTAINS

133 AT Tsikioking we were within a few miles of the
•491 outer foothills of the Tian Shan, which, on the next stage, we were to traverse from south to north. No sign of the Pass, however, was evident, and it was not until we had covered the first few miles of gently rising ground that we found the road took a sudden turn, and we then quickly entered the mouth of a narrowing gorge. At the entrance to the ravine the yellow sand was piled up on the windward side of the rocks to the height of several hundred feet, but as we advanced naked blackness met the eye on every side, and from here on, a rift through the black rocks sliced a road right across the Celestial Range to the plain of Dzungaria.

For nine hours we followed a narrow path, the gradient rising so evenly as to be scarcely noticeable. The high rocks on either side were absolutely denuded,

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and of perpendicular strata. Great naked crags towered above us, and in some parts the side of the mountain was cut clean through as with a gigantic knife. Our previous experience of mountain passes had led us to expect a road which must rise and fall with the course of the mountain, and we were greatly astonished when, hour after hour, we still pursued a course with no semblance of a hill. The rugged grandeur of the scene was most impressive. On either side the loose boulders were flung in wild confusion, though never blocking the path so as to make it impassable to the carts.

As the night wore on the constant winding of the Pass, in which we could never see more than a few hundred feet ahead owing to its tortuous nature, made the stage seem interminable. It appeared as though, after so many hours, the next turn *must* bring an opening to view, but once again the road twisted and vanished round yet another corner. Suddenly, without warning, we emerged, and saw in the brilliant moonlight the inn of Towshui—' Head Spring '—which was a welcome sight indeed.

During the winter months this gorge is closed by the snow, and many travellers have been lost in the drifts caused by the sweeping of the winds round the sharp corners ; the optional road via Turfan has then to be taken. The only signs of life in these desolate, barren, stony chasms were the birds of prey which hovered overhead. A Chinese traveller told us that once, when eating a wayside lunch in the gorge, he turned his head aside for an instant, and like lightning an eagle swept past, taking the bread from his hand.

From Towshui to the next inn, which is Tashitow—' The Great Stone '—the road led over the watershed dividing Chinese Turkestan from Dzungaria. We drove over undulating downs, and as we descended the other

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slope met some rough descents over granite slabs. As we gradually came in view of the northern slopes of the Tian Shan we found the barren, stony face, typical of the south side of this range, exchanged for wooded slopes, while the sandy wastes gave way to short, grassy turf and scrub.

Tashitow, though small, is a place of some importance. Geographically its position is notable, standing as it does on the Dzungarian slopes of the great watershed. From here also is a foot-track to Barkul, and a short cut over the mountains to Turfan, whilst yet another road leads in fifteen days to Uliassutai. It boasts three inns, and a temple with a lake and spring of water, which though sweet was very turbid. The temple is built against a bare rock of a shining black formation, as though it had been polished with blacklead. We followed a good road from Tashitow past Sankochüan—'Three Springs'—to Muleiho—'Stacked Wood Stream.'

It was midnight on Friday when we reached this town, where we were to spend Sunday. We passed down a long street between closed shops, under the frontage of which lay sleeping merchants, doubtless unable to endure the heat of the rooms. Mr. Hunter was ahead of us, and Nimga was waiting to direct us to our inn, which was the only one where rooms were available. He carried in his hand a great bunch of the small, seedless grapes from Turfan—a welcome sight, for we had tasted no fruit since Hami. The inn court, as well as the street, was full of sleeping men, and the landlord's welcome was far from encouraging: 'There are rooms all right,' he said, 'but no one attempts to sleep in them at this season.' Then, turning to our servant, he uttered the one word: 'Bugs'!

There was no alternative, so we spread a macintosh sheet on the *kang* and then lay down, leaving the candle

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lighted, as the most sure means of keeping unwelcome guests at bay. The tins of Keating's powder, which we had on order, had failed us with the other stores, but even had we secured them, nothing can finally circumvent these insects, which creep along the rafters and drop from the ceiling on to the hapless victim beneath! We were soon fast asleep, but at dawn a still worse plague faced us, for the walls were black with loathsome flies, and not one moment's peace did we know throughout our Sabbath rest in Muleiho.

The little town was in the proud position of having been lately raised to the civic status of a '*hsien*' city, in consequence of which it now had its own Resident Civil Magistrate, whose new Yamen had just been erected.

A wooden bridge spanned the wide river which rushed by the city wall, and here the inhabitants were wont to gather in the cool of the day, at the hour when all the animals of the city were led down to be watered.

The arable land was extensive and splendidly irrigated, and there was every sign of prosperity. Strings of little donkeys, driven by Turki vendors, constantly passed our inn door laden with baskets of grapes from Turfan. The large black and white grapes were not yet ripe, but the small seedless variety was plentiful and cheap. This is the kind from which the Turfan sultana is produced in such abundance.

A band of children, with whom we made friends, took us up to a court in the Yamen buildings to see a red deer, which had been caught young in the mountains and was being reared in captivity. Its antlers were particularly fine, and we noticed that all the medicine shops of Muleiho were decorated with splendid specimens of such antlers, which are highly valued for medicinal purposes.

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journey. It was hard for our driver to restrain his horses until we had taken leave, and no sooner was the final word 'ping-an tsai'—'peace be with you'—spoken, than he scrambled to his seat, lashed his team, and instantly the horses sprang forward, breaking into a quick trot. They proved to be in good condition, and we found that travelling by tarantass was comfortable, and indeed far less wearying than by Chinese cart. Moreover we were able to cover six miles per hour at a steady pace, exactly doubling our former speed, the seven hundred miles to Chuguchak[1] being accomplished in a fortnight, whereas by Chinese cart it would have been a journey of twenty-two days. The roads were good, and the jingling bells, the gaily-painted circus hoop, and the freely-harnessed, trotting horses made a cheerful *ensemble*, while at each half-stage there was a wayside inn where we could buy hot water and make tea.

Mr. Hunter had, at the last moment, decided also to come with us as far as Chuguchak. His little ammunition-cart was, therefore, like our own tarantass, laden to its uttermost capacity. Mr. Mather used his own horse, while Nimga rode by Mr. Hunter's cartside. There was a great deal of traffic on the road, carts of merchandise from Russia and Ili constantly passing us. On the first day we met twelve carts laden with tin and galvanised iron pails, such as are so popular on the Urumchi market, and without which no traveller moves; matches, sugar, and leather formed the cargo of many others. It was long after dark when we reached the first inn at Changki. Every room was occupied, and the courtyard was full of vehicles laden with grain, cotton and water-melons. Each driver was sleeping near his merchandise, and the stalls were crowded with beasts that kicked, squealed, and bit at each other throughout the night. Seeing that there was no

[1] [From Urumchi -- Analyst]

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vegetables and fruit, especially grapes and apples, find a ready market in the capital. The grapes were the largest we had ever seen, and we carried in the cart an abundant supply which more than made up for the lightening of our load by the bread we had consumed! We were now only a few miles from the Manas River, which is the most important stream in this part of Turkestan. Its source is in the Celestial Mountains, but it finally loses itself in the sand. A little earlier in the season, when the snows were melting, the Manas River is often impassable, and a Chinese lady friend had a few weeks earlier been upset into the water and nearly lost her life. We were now in the last days of August, and it was already cold in the heights of the Tian Shan, therefore we had no cause to fear the sudden treacherous rise of the water which comes from the melting snow, and we crossed without difficulty.

Our next stopping-place was Ulan-Usun—'Blue Water'—where we had the advantage of occupying the inn room which had been papered and swept for the use of the Governor's son, who had preceded us on his way to Zaisan. Fresh red paper with eulogistic phrases decorated the door frame; clean matting covered the *kang*, and the court had been generally tidied up in honour of such an important guest. The flies, however, still remained.

The country here was splendid grazing ground, covered with tall 'chi-chi' grass. The Mongolian nomads pitch their tents on this plain during the winter months, when the cold drives them down from the higher pastures.

Our driver, though a surly cross-grained fellow, was beginning to thaw under our constant friendly advances. His knowledge of Chinese was very poor, but the present of a bunch of grapes or a piece of new bread,

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during which we travelled. Earlier in the summer the Manas and other rivers constitute a real peril. The cold in Turkestan and Southern Siberia in early winter increases the hardship of the way, and when the spring thaw sets in, the roads around Urumchi are sometimes impassable for weeks, owing to mud-pits which are so extensive that no cart can negotiate them.

CHAPTER XLIII

ARRIVAL AT CHUGUCHAK

On September 2nd we sighted Hsihu. It is an important town surrounded by a considerable area of irrigated land, where was the junction of the Ili and Chuguchak main roads. The place presented the usual aspect of a central point used by farmers as a market. The streets were very countrified; nevertheless large sums of money pass from hand to hand between the grain merchants and their customers. There were the usual bazaars, fruit and vegetable vendors, and general shops where travellers might buy a pail, basin, towel, soap, or cigarettes, while herbalists showed a dusty store of rhubarb, cardamoms, liquorice, fennel, cloves, and ginger. The inns were crowded with caravans travelling to Ili, or arriving from Siberia. Knowing that even by tarantass we should not reach Chuguchak for another ten days, and that on leaving this fertile land we should pass through a barren country providing neither fruit nor vegetables, we loaded up once more with cucumbers, melons, and grapes, and late in the evening a vine-grower appeared carrying a basket of splendid fruit freshly cut, on which we all feasted for several days. A long stage of sixty miles, the latter part of which was over a sandy waste between tamarisk

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491 mounds and clumps of saxaul, brought us to the borders of the Kueitun River, by the banks of which was a 133 village where we spent the night. The river, which was wide and rapid, was crossed by a good bridge. From our inn court we had access to the bank, so we took advantage of the running water to wash a few clothes, not that we expected to make them the cleaner by dipping them in the yellow flood, but as fleas were very bad we hoped that some of them would be carried away by the force of the current.

491 At 2-30 a.m. Sandy Macnab fetched us out of bed for an early start. A twenty-five mile drive, over loose sand mixed with loess, brought us to one single hut where a handsome Chantow woman and her daughter, wearing red veils, talked to us while we boiled a saucepan of hot water and cooked a meal. There was only one well, with a very poor supply of water.

[312] The thirty miles of the afternoon stage to Hansantai traversed a road so hard and even that it would have been reckoned as a good motor-track in any country. Here we rested for the Sunday. We were now near a 579 region where many travellers had been robbed, for the country was wild in the extreme and offered a natural protection to brigand bands. The Governor had placed a military guard at this point, to supply escorts as needed, and a band of mounted police patrolled the 167 roads. In this lonely spot lived two old men, brothers, who told us that at the age of fourteen and sixteen they had run away together from their home in Sian, and wandering to 'Kow Wai' had lived here ever since, never returning to their relations, nor even ever hearing of them again. They were now both over sixty years of age, and their one pleasure in life was to sit and talk with travellers from China, from whom they were never weary of hearing of the glories of modern Sian.

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which he mixed the fodder for his horses, for these fine 494
animals could only cover the long stages required of them by dint of great care and good feeding. This he gave them, and their good condition was a daily satisfaction to us. The friendliness between our driver and ourselves was becoming so warm that on an occasion such as this he was not only willing to borrow the teapot but the tea also! After an hour's rest we moved on, and by the late afternoon passed a lonely enclosure occupied by two Turki. The high hills around we knew to be the shelter of reckless robber-bands, and Mr. Hunter had firmly declared that we must at all costs push on to Kweitun by nightfall; Sandy, however, was differently disposed, and before he could be stopped he drove his team into the enclosure, and untied the circus hoop. We as a party, however, absolutely refused to dismount, and finally Nimga turned the horses' heads and led them out of the courtyard, when the stubborn Macnab was compelled to follow. For the next few hours he sang for our benefit sundry weird chants which, sounding as they did, so much like imprecatory liturgies, caused us to ask him what he was singing. 'Singing to Huda (God)' was his reply, and we knew that our surmise was correct—he was calling down vengeance on this party of Gentiles.

After a night in Yamatu we left on another forty-seven mile stage. The road at first was up and down [491] •
hill, like a switchback, and as the long body of the tarantass makes it quite unsuited to sharp bends, we walked over the more dangerous parts. This proceeding greatly annoyed Macnab, but later on when we met a party whose faces were cut and bleeding from a spill, he had to admit that we were in the right. At midday we halted by another Qazaq tent. As soon as 563
the owners sighted us they came forward to ask if any 294

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563 member of the party knew how to mend a sewing
294 machine. It seemed they had bought one from some destitute Russians, and now something had gone wrong, and they could make no further use of it.

One of the party (who is known to her fellow-travellers as a walking encyclopedia and an emporium of general knowledge), undertook to do what was necessary, and she was soon seated on a pile of rugs in the tent surrounded by a group of wondering nomads, as she skilfully made the needful repairs. Asking for some cotton she was given a small roll of cardboard, on which had been wound some coarsely-twisted skein thread. They had no other, but when we produced a reel of good English cotton and threaded it to the machine, the
563 delight of the whole family knew no bounds. While
231 this operation was in progress Mr. Hunter came into the tent, and the fierce dog, always on guard, fastened its teeth into his trouser leg. We learnt then that the only safe way to enter a nomad's tent is backwards, keeping a sharp lookout for the watchdog, who can never be caught napping!

• 494 We spent the next night at Toli, and on leaving reached our maximum day's stage of one hundred miles. We got off at 5 a.m. and made good progress for the first hundred *li* to Laofengkow. On the way we met a band of Chinese, travelling back to Urumchi from Siberia, with a large supply of opium, which they had sown and reaped within Russian territory. After a brief rest we were on the road again for the second hundred *li* of our day's journey. We did so well that in a weak moment we gave way to Macnab's obstinate determination to keep in, over a lonely Gobi road, with another party of travellers, consisting of a Nogai gentleman and two charming
080 little boys, on their way to Moscow. It was late after-

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noon when we left Ertaochiao on the understanding that it was but a very short distance to an inn, which, though situated in a desert district, and very small, was reported to be comfortable. Mr. Hunter then kindly went ahead to make preparations at the inn, and we followed him over a country which became increasingly desolate. The track led across a sandy waste, between tamarisk mounds and an occasional tuft of 'chi chi' grass. There was no telegraph wire to guide us, and hour after hour we drove on through the same monotonous scenery, with no distinctive marks and no sign of the inn we were seeking. Both drivers confessed themselves baffled, and as the darkness fell they had to admit that we had missed our way, and although they dismounted and walked about seeking a landmark, they found none. Moreover, travellers in these regions are loath to shout or to light camp-fires, for fear of revealing their whereabouts to horse-stealers. After a considerable time a voice was heard calling, which we recognised as that of Nimga, but on replying we were answered from another direction by Mr. Hunter, when gradually we all came together again and found that he, too, had missed the inn, so that we had no option but to push on. At midnight we were still going, but were suddenly brought to a standstill by entering a soft marshy ground, the extent and treachery of which it was impossible to gauge. Three of the carts of merchandise were already in the bog, from which they could not be extricated, so the horses' legs were secured with iron padlocks, while the whole party lay down on the ground, and in five minutes all were sound asleep. Four hours' drive on the next morning brought us at length to Chuguchak, where we were indeed glad to get our first substantial meal in twenty-four hours.

This town is known to Russians as Chuguchak, to